

311  
L86p

Longfellow, H.W.



Poems for

intermediate grade

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# FIVE CENT CLASSICS.

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- 2. Æsop's Fables.— 1.
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*Young Folk's Library of Choice Literature*

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POEMS FOR INTERMEDIATE GRADE

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SELECTIONS FROM LONGFELLOW

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THE VILLAGE BLACKSMITH.

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L86p



## THE VILLAGE BLACKSMITH.

1. Under a spreading chestnut-tree  
The village smithy stands;  
The smith, a mighty man is he,  
With large and sinewy hands;  
And the muscles of his brawny arms  
Are strong as iron bands.
2. His hair is crisp, and black, and long;  
His face is like the tan;  
His brow is wet with honest sweat;  
He earns whate'er he can,  
And looks the whole world in the face,  
For he owes not any man.
3. Week in, week out, from morn to night,  
You can hear his bellows blow;  
You can hear him swing his heavy sledge,  
With measured beat and slow,  
Like a sexton ringing the village bell  
When the evening sun is low.

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H. BATCHELOR 6 Nov 1935

4. And children, coming home from school,  
Look in at the open door;  
They love to see the flaming forge,  
And hear the bellows roar,  
And catch the burning sparks that fly  
Like chaff from a threshing-floor.
  
5. He goes on Sunday to the church,  
And sits among his boys;  
He hears the parson pray and preach;  
He hears his daughter's voice  
Singing in the village choir,  
And it makes his heart rejoice.
  
6. It sounds to him like her mother's voice,  
Singing in Paradise!  
He needs must think of her once more —  
How in the grave she lies;  
And, with his hard, rough hand, he wipes  
A tear out of his eyes.
  
7. Toiling, rejoicing, sorrowing,  
Onward through life he goes;  
Each morning sees some task begin,  
Each evening sees its close;  
Something attempted, something done,  
Has earned a night's repose.



8. Thanks, thanks to thee, my worthy friend,  
 For the lesson thou hast taught!  
 Thus, at the flaming forge of life,  
 Our fortunes must be wrought;  
 Thus, on its sounding anvil, shaped  
 Each burning deed and thought!
- 

### THE OLD CLOCK ON THE STAIRS.

1. Somewhat back from the village street  
 Stands the old-fashioned country-seat;  
 Across its antique portico<sup>1</sup>  
 Tall poplar trees their shadows throw;  
 And from its station in the hall  
 An ancient time-piece says to all:  
 "Forever — never!  
 Never — forever!"
2. Half-way up the stairs it stands,  
 And points and beckons with its hands,  
 From its case of massive oak,  
 Like a monk, who, under his cloak,  
 Crosses himself, and sighs, alas!  
 With sorrowful voice to all who pass:  
 "Forever — never!  
 Never — forever!"

<sup>1</sup> *portico*, porch, piazza.



THE OLD CLOCK ON THE STAIRS.

3. By day its voice is low and light;  
But in the silent dead of night,  
Distinct as a passing footstep's fall,  
It echoes along the vacant hall,  
Along the ceiling, along the floor,  
And seems to say, at each chamber-door, —  
    "Forever — never!  
    Never — forever!"
4. Through days of sorrow and of mirth,  
Through days of death and days of birth,  
Through every swift vicissitude  
Of changeful time, unchanged it has stood,  
And as if, like God, it all things saw,  
It calmly repeats those words of awe, —  
    "Forever — never!  
    Never — forever!"
5. In that mansion used to be  
Free-hearted Hospitality;  
His great fires up the chimney roared;  
The stranger feasted at his board;  
But, like the skeleton at the feast,  
That warning timepiece never ceased, —  
    "Forever — never!  
    Never — forever!"

6. There groups of merry children played,  
There youths and maidens dreaming strayed;  
O precious hours! O golden prime,  
And affluence<sup>1</sup> of love and time!  
Even as a miser counts his gold,  
Those hours the ancient timepiece told, —  
“Forever — never!  
Never — forever!”
7. From that chamber, clothed in white,  
The bride came forth on her wedding night:  
There, in that silent room below,  
The dead lay in his shroud of snow;  
And in the hush that followed the prayer,  
Was heard that old clock on the stair, —  
“Forever — never!  
Never — forever!”
8. All are scattered now and fled,  
Some are married, some are dead;  
And when I ask, with throbs of pain,  
“Ah! when shall they all meet again?”  
As in the days long-since gone by,  
The ancient timepiece makes reply, —  
“Forever — never!  
Never — forever!”

<sup>1</sup> *affluence*, abundance.

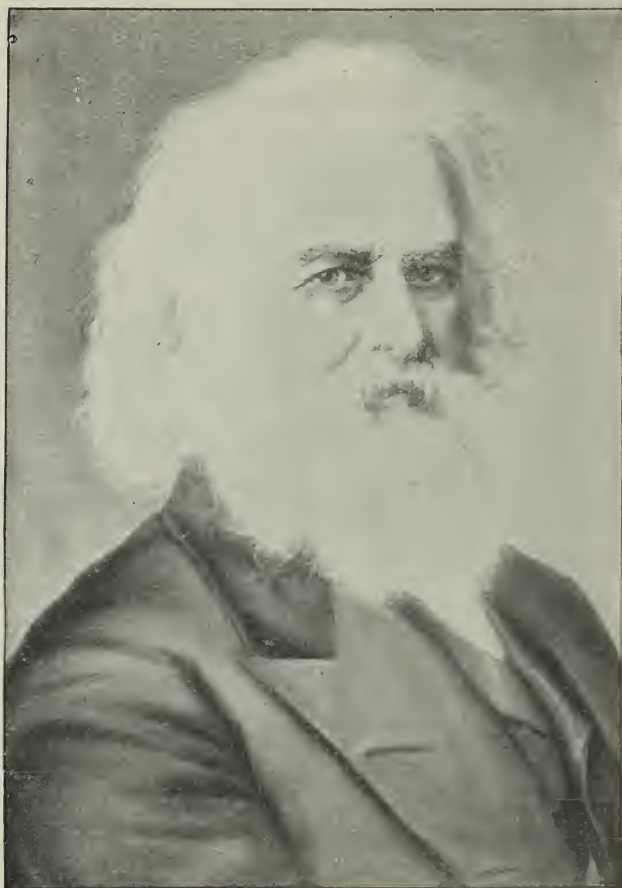
9. Never here, forever there,  
Where all parting, pain, and care,  
And death, and time shall disappear, —  
Forever there, but never here!  
The horologe<sup>1</sup> of eternity  
Sayeth this incessantly, —  
    “Forever — never!  
    Never — forever!”
- 

## THE ARROW AND THE SONG.

1. I shot an arrow into the air,  
It fell to earth, I knew not where;  
For, so swiftly it flew, the sight  
Could not follow it in its flight.
2. I breathed a song into the air,  
It fell to earth, I knew not where;  
For who has sight so keen and strong,  
That it can follow the flight of song?
3. Long, long afterward, in an oak  
I found the arrow, still unbroke;  
And the song, from beginning to end,  
I found again in the heart of a friend.

<sup>1</sup> horologe, timepiece.





HENRY W. LONGFELLOW.

## THE OPEN WINDOW.

1. The old house by the lindens<sup>1</sup>  
    Stood silent in the shade,  
    And on the gravelled pathway  
    The light and shadow played.
2. I saw the nursery windows  
    Wide open to the air;  
    But the faces of the children,  
    They were no longer there.
3. The large Newfoundland house-dog  
    Was standing by the door;  
    He looked for his little playmates,  
    Who would return no more.
4. They walked not under the lindens,  
    They played not in the hall;  
    But shadow, and silence, and sadness  
    Were hanging over all.
5. The birds sang in the branches,  
    With sweet, familiar tone;  
    But the voices of the children  
    Will be heard in dreams alone!
6. And the boy that walked beside me,  
    He could not understand

<sup>1</sup> *lindens*, linden trees.

Why closer in mine, ah! closer,  
 I pressed his warm, soft hand!

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### THE DAY IS DONE.

1. The day is done, and the darkness  
 Falls from the wings of Night,  
 As a feather is wafted downward  
 From an eagle in his flight.
2. I see the lights of the village  
 Gleam through the rain and the mist,  
 And a feeling of sadness comes o'er me,  
 That my soul cannot resist:
3. A feeling of sadness and longing,  
 That is not akin to pain,  
 And resembles sorrow only  
 As the mist resembles the rain.
4. Come, read to me some poem,  
 Some simple and heartfelt lay,  
 That shall soothe this restless feeling,  
 And banish the thoughts of day.
5. Not from the grand old masters,  
 Not from the bards<sup>1</sup> sublime,  
 Whose distant footsteps echo  
 Through the corridors of Time.

<sup>1</sup> *bards*, ancient poets.

6. For, like strains of martial music,  
Their mighty thoughts suggest  
Life's endless toil and endeavor;  
And to-night I long for rest.
7. Read from some humbler poet,  
Whose songs gushed from his heart,  
As showers from the clouds of summer,  
Or tears from the eyelids start;
8. Who, through long days of labor;  
And nights devoid of ease,  
Still heard in his soul the music  
Of wonderful melodies.
9. Such songs have power to quiet  
The restless pulse of care,  
And come like the benediction<sup>1</sup>  
That follows after prayer.
10. Then read from the treasured volume  
The poem of thy choice,  
And lend to the rhyme of the poet  
The beauty of thy voice.
11. And the night shall be filled with music,  
And the cares that infest the day,  
Shall fold their tents, like the Arabs,  
And as silently, steal away.

<sup>1</sup> *benediction*, blessing.

## RAIN IN SUMMER.

1. How beautiful is the rain!  
After the dust and heat,  
In the broad and fiery street,  
In the narrow lane,  
How beautiful is the rain!
  
2. How it clatters upon the roofs  
Like the tramp of hoofs!  
How it gushes and struggles out  
From the throat of the overflowing spout!
  
3. Across the window-pane  
It pours and pours,  
And swift and wide,  
With a muddy tide,  
Like a river down the gutter roars  
The rain, the welcome rain!
  
4. The sick man from his chamber looks  
At the twisted brooks;  
He can feel the cool  
Breath of each little pool;  
His fevered brain  
Grows calm again,  
And he breathes a blessing on the rain!



5. From the neighboring school  
Come the boys  
With more than their wonted noise  
And commotion;  
And down the wet streets  
Sail their mimic<sup>1</sup> fleets,  
Till the treacherous pool  
Engulfs them in its whirling  
And turbulent ocean.
6. In the country on every side,  
Where, far and wide,  
Like a leopard's tawny and spotted hide,  
Stretches the plain,  
To the dry grass and the drier grain  
How welcome is the rain!
7. In the furrowed land  
The toilsome and patient oxen stand,  
Lifting the yoke-encumbered<sup>2</sup> head,  
With their dilated nostrils spread,  
They silently inhale  
The clover-scented gale,  
And the vapors that arise  
From the well-watered and smoking soil.  
For this rest in the furrow after toil,

<sup>1</sup> *mimic*, copies (toy.)

<sup>2</sup> *encumbered*, burdened.

Their large and lustrous eyes  
Seem to thank the Lord,  
More than man's spoken word.

8. Near at hand,  
From under the sheltering trees,  
The farmer sees  
His pastures and his fields of grain,  
As they bend their tops  
To the numberless beating drops  
Of the incessant rain.  
He counts it as no sin  
That he sees therein  
Only his own thrift and gain.

9. These and far more than these,  
The Poet sees!  
He can behold  
Aquarius<sup>1</sup> old  
Walking the fenceless fields of air;  
And, from each ample fold  
Of the clouds about him rolled,  
Scattering everywhere  
The showery rain,  
As the farmer scatters his grain.

<sup>1</sup> *Aquarius*, water-bearer.

10. He can behold  
Things manifold  
That have not yet been wholly told, —  
Have not been wholly sung nor said:  
For his thought, which never stops,  
Follows the water-drops  
Down to the graves of the dead,  
Down through chasms and gulfs profound  
To the dreary fountain-head  
Of lakes and rivers under ground,  
And sees them, when the rain is done,  
On the bridge of colors seven,  
Climbing up once more to heaven,  
Opposite the setting sun.

11. Thus the seer,<sup>1</sup>  
With vision clear,  
Sees forms appear and disappear,  
In the perpetual round of strange  
Mysterious change  
From birth to death, from death to birth;  
From earth to heaven, from heaven to earth,  
Till glimpses more sublime  
Of things unseen before  
Unto his wondering eyes reveal

<sup>2</sup> *seer*, prophet, wise man.

The universe, as an immeasurable wheel  
Turning forevermore  
In the rapid and rushing river of time.

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### THE REAPER AND THE FLOWERS.

1. There is a Reaper, whose name is Death,  
    And, with his sickle keen,  
He reaps the bearded grain at a breath,  
    And the flowers that grow between.
2. "Shall I have naught that is fair?" saith he;  
    "Have naught but the bearded grain?  
Though the breath of these flowers is sweet to me,  
    I will give them all back again."
3. He gazed at the flowers with tearful eyes,  
    He kissed their drooping leaves;  
It was for the Lord of Paradise  
    He bound them in his sheaves.
4. "My Lord has need of these flowerets gay,"  
    The Reaper said, and smiled;  
"Dear tokens of the earth are they,  
    Where he was once a child."

5. "They shall all bloom in fields of light,  
Transplanted by my care;  
And saints, upon their garments white,  
These sacred blossoms wear."
6. And the mother gave, in tears and pain,  
The flowers she most did love;  
She knew she should find them all again  
In the fields of light above.
7. Oh, not in cruelty, not in wrath,  
The Reaper came that day;  
'Twas an angel visited the green earth,  
And took the flowers away.

## AFTERNOON IN FEBRUARY.

1. The day is ending,  
The night is descending;  
The marsh is frozen,  
The river dead.
2. Through clouds like ashes,  
The red sun flashes  
On village windows  
That glimmer red.



3. The snow recommences;  
The buried fences  
Mark no longer  
The road o'er the plain;
  4. While through the meadows,  
Like fearful shadows,  
Slowly passes  
A funeral train.
  5. The bell is pealing,  
And every feeling  
Within me responds  
To the dismal knell.
  6. Shadows are trailing,  
My heart is bewailing  
And tolling within  
Like a funeral bell.
- 

### THE RAINY DAY.

1. The day is cold, and dark, and dreary;  
It rains, and the wind is never weary;  
The vine still clings to the mouldering wall,  
But at every gust the dead leaves fall,  
And the day is dark and dreary.

2. My life is cold, and dark, and dreary;  
 It rains, and the wind is never weary;  
 My thoughts still cling to the mouldering past,  
 But the hopes of youth fall thick in the blast,  
 And the days are dark and dreary.
3. Be still, sad heart, and cease repining;  
 Behind the clouds is the sun still shining;  
 Thy fate is the common fate of all;  
 Into each life some rain must fall:  
 Some days must be dark and dreary.

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### EXCELSIOR.

1. The shades of night were falling fast,  
 As through an Alpine village passed  
 A youth, who bore, 'mid snow and ice,  
 A banner with the strange device,  
 Excelsior!<sup>1</sup>
2. His brow was sad; his eye beneath,  
 Flashed like a falchion<sup>2</sup> from its sheath,  
 And like a silver clarion<sup>3</sup> rung  
 The accents of that unknown tongue,  
 Excelsior!

<sup>1</sup> *Ex-cel'-si-or*, still higher.    <sup>2</sup> *fal'-chion*, a sword.    <sup>3</sup> *clar'ion*, a bugle.

3. In happy homes he saw the light  
Of household fires gleam warm and bright ;  
Above, the spectral <sup>1</sup> glaciers <sup>2</sup> shone,  
And from his lips escaped a groan,  
                    Excelsior!
4. "Try not the pass!" the old man said;  
"Dark lowers the tempest overhead,  
The roaring torrent is deep and wide!"  
And loud the clarion voice replied,  
                    Excelsior!
5. "Oh, stay!" the maiden said, "and rest  
Thy weary head upon this breast!"  
A tear stood in his bright blue eye,  
But still he answered, with a sigh,  
                    Excelsior!
6. "Beware the pine tree's withered branch!  
Beware the awful avalanche!" <sup>3</sup>  
This was the peasant's last Good-night.  
A voice replied far up the height,  
                    Excelsior!
7. At break of day, as heavenward  
The pious monks of St. Bernard

<sup>1</sup> *spectral*, ghostly, awesome. <sup>2</sup> *glaciers*, rivers of ice. <sup>3</sup> *av-a-lanche*, a large body of sliding snow, like a landslide.

Uttered the oft-repeated prayer,  
A voice cried through the startled air,  
    Excelsior!

8. A traveler, by the faithful hound,  
Half-buried in the snow was found,  
Still grasping in his hand of ice  
That banner with the strange device,  
    Excelsior!

9. There in the twilight cold and gray,  
Lifeless, but beautiful, he lay,  
And from the sky, serene and far,  
A voice fell, like a falling star,  
    Excelsior!

### THE WRECK OF THE HESPERUS.

1. It was the schooner Hesperus  
    That sailed the wintry sea,  
And the skipper had taken his little daughter  
    To bear him company.
2. Blue were her eyes as the fairy flax,  
    Her cheeks like the dawn of day,  
And her bosom white as the hawthorn buds  
    That ope in the month of May.

3. The skipper he stood beside the helm,  
His pipe was in his mouth,  
And he watched how the veering flaw<sup>1</sup> did blow  
The smoke now west, now south.
4. Then up and spake an old sailor  
Had sailed the Spanish main,<sup>2</sup>  
"I pray thee put into yonder port,  
For I fear a hurricane.
5. "Last night the moon had a golden ring,  
And to-night no moon we see!"  
The skipper he blew a whiff from his pipe,  
And a scornful laugh laughed he.
6. Colder and colder blew the wind,  
A gale from the northeast;  
The snow fell hissing in the brine,  
And the billows frothed like yeast.
7. Down came the storm, and smote amain<sup>3</sup>  
The vessel in its strength;  
She shuddered and paused like a frightened steed,  
Then leaped her cable's length.
8. "Come hither! come hither! my little daughter,  
And do not tremble so;

<sup>1</sup> *veering flaw*, shifting wind.    <sup>2</sup> *Spanish main*, northern coast of South America.  
<sup>3</sup> *amain*, with great violence.



For I can weather the roughest gale  
That ever wind did blow."

9. He wrapped her warm in his seaman's coat  
Against the stinging blast;  
He cut a rope from a broken spar,  
And bound her to the mast.
10. "O father! I hear the church-bells ring;  
O say, what may it be?"  
"'T is a fog-bell on a rock-bound coast!"  
And he steered for the open sea.
11. "O father! I hear the sound of guns;  
O say, what may it be?"  
"Some ship in distress, that cannot live  
In such an angry sea!"
12. "O father I see a gleaming light;  
O say, what may it be?"  
But the father answered never a word,  
A frozen corpse was he.
13. Lashed to the helm, all stiff and stark,  
With his face turned to the skies,  
The lantern gleamed through the gleaming snow  
On his fixed and glassy eyes.

14. Then the maiden clasped her hands and prayed  
That saved she might be;  
And she thought of Christ, who stilled the wave  
On the lake of Galilee.
15. And fast through the midnight dark and drear,  
Through the whistling sleet and snow,  
Like a sheeted ghost the vessel swept  
Towards the reef of Norman's Woe.<sup>1</sup>
16. And ever the fitful gusts between  
A sound came from the land;  
It was the sound of the trampling surf  
On the rocks and the hard sea-sand.
17. The breakers were right beneath her bows,  
She drifted a dreary wreck,  
And a whooping billow swept the crew  
Like icicles from her deck.
18. She struck where the white and fleecy waves  
Looked soft as carded wool,  
But the cruel rocks they gored her side  
Like the horns of an angry bull.
19. Her rattling shrouds, all sheathed in ice,  
With the masts went by the board:

<sup>1</sup> a dangerous reef of rocks near the entrance to Gloucester harbor, Mass.

Like a vessel of glass she stove and sank, —  
 Ho! ho! the breakers roared!

20. At daybreak, on the bleak sea-beach  
 A fisherman stood aghast  
 To see the form of a maiden fair  
 Lashed close to a drifting mast.
21. The salt sea was frozen on her breast,  
 The salt tears in her eyes;  
 And he saw her hair, like the brown sea-weed,  
 On the billows fall and rise.
22. Such was the wreck of the Hesperus,  
 In the midnight and the snow!  
 Christ save us all from a death like this  
 On the reef of Norman's Woe!

---

### PAUL REVERE'S RIDE.

1. Listen, my children, and you shall hear  
 Of the midnight ride of Paul Revere.  
 On the eighteenth of April in Seventy-five;  
 Hardly a man is now alive  
 Who remembers that famous day and year.

2. He said to his friend, "If the British march  
By land or sea from the town<sup>1</sup> to-night,  
Hang a lantern aloft in the belfry arch  
Of the North Church tower as a signal light,—  
One if by land, and two if by sea,  
And I on the opposite shore<sup>2</sup> will be,  
Ready to ride and spread the alarm  
Through every Middlesex village and farm,  
For the country-folk to be up and to arm."
  
3. Then he said "Good-night!" and with muffled  
    oar  
Silently rowed to the Charlestown shore,  
Just as the moon rose over the bay,  
Where swinging wide at her moorings lay  
The Somerset, British man-of-war;  
A phantom ship, with each mast and spar  
Across the moon like a prison bar,  
And a huge black hulk that was magnified  
By its own reflection in the tide.
  
4. Meanwhile, his friend, through alley and street,  
Wanders and watches with eager ears,  
Till in the silence around him he hears  
The muster of men at the barrack door,  
The sound of arms, and the tramp of feet,

<sup>1</sup> Boston. <sup>2</sup> Charlestown.

And the measured tread of the grenadiers<sup>1</sup>  
 Marching down to their boats on the shore.

5. Then he climbed to the tower of the church,  
 Up the wooden stairs with stealthy tread,  
 To the belfry chamber overhead,  
 And startled the pigeons from their perch,  
 On the sombre rafters, that round him made  
 Masses and moving shapes of shade,—  
 Up the light ladder, slender and tall,  
 To the highest window in the wall,  
 Where he paused to listen and look down  
 A moment on the roofs of the town,  
 And the moonlight flowing over all.

. . .

6. Meanwhile, impatient to mount and ride,  
 Booted and spurred, with a heavy stride  
 On the opposite shore walked Paul Revere.  
 Now he patted his horse's side,  
 Now gazed at the landscape far and near,  
 Then, impetuous, stamped the earth,  
 And turned and tightened his saddle girth;  
 But mostly he watched with eager search  
 The belfry-tower of the Old North Church,  
 As it rose above the graves on the hill,  
 Lonely and spectral and sombre and still.

<sup>1</sup> *grenadiers*, British soldiers.



OLD NORTH CHURCH.

7. And lo! as he looks, on the belfry's height  
A glimmer, and then a gleam of light!  
He springs to the saddle, the bridle he turns,  
But lingers and gazes, till full on his sight  
A *second* lamp in the belfry burns!

. . . .

8. A hurry of hoofs in a village street,  
A shape in the moonlight, a bulk in the dark,  
And beneath from the pebbles, in passing, a spark  
Struck out by a steed that flies fearless and fleet:  
That was all! And yet, through the gloom and  
the light,  
The fate of a nation was riding that night;

. . . .

9. It was twelve by the village clock  
When he crossed the bridge into Medford town.  
He heard the crowing of the cock,  
And the barking of the farmer's dog,  
And felt the damp of the river fog,  
That rises after the sun goes down.

10. It was one by the village clock,  
When he rode into Lexington.  
He saw the gilded weathercock  
Swim in the moonlight as he passed,



And the meeting-house windows, blank and bare,  
Gaze at him with a spectral glare,  
As if they already stood aghast  
At the bloody work they would look upon.

11. It was two by the village clock,  
When he came to the bridge in Concord town.  
He heard the bleating of the flock,  
And the twitter of the birds among the trees,  
And felt the breath of the morning breeze  
Blowing over the meadows brown.

. . .

12. So through the night rode Paul Revere;  
And so through the night went his cry of alarm  
To every Middlesex village and farm,—  
A cry of defiance and not of fear,  
A voice in the darkness, a knock at the door,  
And a word that shall echo forevermore!  
For, borne on the night-wind of the Past,  
Through all our history, to the last,  
In the hour of darkness and peril and need,  
The people will waken and listen to hear  
The hurrying hoof-beats of that steed,  
And the midnight message of Paul Revere.

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 100. Fremont and Carson.  
 103. Stories and Rhymes of Woodland. I.  
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 105. Stories and Rhymes of Birdland. I.  
 106. Stories and Rhymes of Birdland. II.  
 107. Stories and Rhymes of Flowerland. I.  
 108. Stories and Rhymes of Flowerland. II.

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